opinion that she would be taken if she did undertake to pass by the fort, and that he thought that this was "sure enough to make any movement upon."[77] But this was all, and it was certainly very general, and anything but definite and satisfactory.

And when one considers the enormous interests at stake,—when one thinks of the fleet,—or successive fleets rather,—of unprotected transports containing thousands and thousands of brave men on their way to the seat of war,—when one remembers the terrible and deadly work which the formidable ironclad had just shown herself able to accomplish with impunity,—one cannot help being amazed at McClellan's decision. "I have," he wrote the next day to Fox, "such a living faith in the gallant little *Monitor* that *I* feel that we can trust her; so *I* have determined on the Port Monroe movement."[1]

The language of this note shows, more plainly than anything else could, the extent to which McClellan was continually influenced by his imagination, and his constitutional inability, for such it really seems to have been, to meet grave problems with the sobriety and feeling of responsibility, and clear and vigorous sense, which a man in such an important position ought assuredly to possess.

Both the Urbana and the Peninsular projects were open to very grave objections, and no experienced and sagacious man of affairs in McClellan's place would ever have thought seriously of adopting either of them, if he entertained the same opinion as to the strength of Johnston's army which was held

[1] I C. W., 629 ; McClellan to Fox.